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HOUSE MEMORIAL 38

**49TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2009**

INTRODUCED BY

Sandra D. Jeff

A MEMORIAL

REQUESTING DETENTION CENTERS TO TAKE APPROPRIATE ACTION TO  
PREVENT THE ACCIDENTAL DRUG OVERDOSE OF DETAINEES AFTER  
RELEASE.

WHEREAS, more than three hundred people in New Mexico died  
in 2007 of accidental drug overdoses, the majority of which  
were preventable; and

WHEREAS, according to the department of health, New  
Mexico's prescription opiate and heroin-related drug overdose  
death rates are significantly higher than the national average;  
and

WHEREAS, state and local public health agencies have long  
supported effective overdose prevention programming; and

WHEREAS, naloxone, a medication that reverses opioid  
overdoses, is a critical component of any effective overdose

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1 prevention and response program and has been distributed to  
2 people at high risk of overdose in New Mexico since 2001; and

3 WHEREAS, participants in programs incorporating naloxone  
4 report an increased connection to safety and personal health  
5 information and resources; and

6 WHEREAS, the frequency of heroin use decreased among  
7 opioid users in a pilot study of naloxone distribution; and

8 WHEREAS, according to the department of health, about  
9 three hundred people reported using naloxone to save lives in  
10 2008 alone; and

11 WHEREAS, a study published in 2008 found that male  
12 prisoners were twenty-nine times more likely to die during the  
13 week following release, while female prisoners were sixty-nine  
14 times more likely to die during this period, relative to the  
15 general population; and

16 WHEREAS, on December 4, 2008, Amber A. Archibeque, a young  
17 woman with a history of heroin addiction, needlessly died in  
18 Albuquerque due to a heroin overdose four hours after release  
19 from jail; and

20 WHEREAS, according to a recent report conducted by the  
21 federal substance abuse and mental health services  
22 administration, an estimated fifty-five thousand New Mexicans  
23 need, but are not receiving, treatment for an illicit drug use  
24 problem; and

25 WHEREAS, numerous scientific studies have demonstrated

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1 that medication-assisted treatment using methadone or a  
2 combination of buprenorphine and naloxone is the most effective  
3 treatment for individuals addicted to heroin and other opiates,  
4 including such prescription drugs as hydrocodone, oxycodone,  
5 morphine, hydromorphone and fentanyl; and

6 WHEREAS, according to the RAND corporation, every one  
7 dollar (\$1.00) invested in substance abuse treatment results in  
8 a savings to taxpayers of more than seven dollars (\$7.00)  
9 through reduced societal costs of crime, violence and loss of  
10 productivity; and

11 WHEREAS, according to a report published by the justice  
12 policy institute, appropriate substance abuse treatment  
13 significantly reduces criminal activity both during and after  
14 treatment; and

15 WHEREAS, pilot programs have been established in several  
16 locations around the state that link jail detainees during and  
17 after detention to effective, low-threshold substance abuse  
18 treatment and to overdose prevention programs;

19 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF  
20 REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that detention  
21 centers be requested to form partnerships with local and state  
22 public health agencies to increase access to overdose  
23 prevention services and substance abuse treatment services for  
24 detainees before and after release; and

25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that naloxone and overdose

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1 prevention literature be provided to detainees with histories  
2 of opioid use before or upon release and that detainees be  
3 educated about the risk of relapse and overdose in order to  
4 prevent needless loss of lives; and

5 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that detention centers ensure that  
6 detainees are released in safe locations during daylight hours  
7 with adequate access to a telephone and to transportation; and

8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that detention centers establish  
9 resources that support detainees with substance abuse problems  
10 during and after detention, including providing medication-  
11 assisted treatment, substance abuse treatment and discharge  
12 planning; and

13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be  
14 transmitted to the wardens of all of the detention centers in  
15 New Mexico, the secretary of health and the governor.

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